

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) A method of assembling steering columns, comprising the steps of:

forming a cylindrical column jacket;

forming a pair of joint projections comprising inner surfaces in a circular arc shape conforming to an outer surface of said column jacket on a bracket;

~~temporary~~ temporarily fitting said projections of said bracket along the outer surface of said column jacket; and

crimping said projections into the outer surface of said column jacket, wherein a punch is applied with an inner surface of said column jacket being supported by a die.

2. (Currently amended) A method of assembling steering columns, comprising the steps of:

forming a cylindrical column jacket;

forming a pair of flat surfaces back to back on an outer surface of said cylindrical column jacket;

forming a pair of joint projections comprising flat inner surfaces conforming to the pair of flat surfaces of said column jacket on a bracket;

~~temporary~~ temporarily fitting said projections of said bracket along the flat surface of said column jacket; and

crimping said projections into the flat ~~surface~~ surfaces of said column jacket, wherein a punch is applied with an inner surface of said column jacket being supported by a die.

3. (Original) A method of assembling steering columns according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein in forming said a pair of joint projections, said projections are symmetrically formed with respect to the center of said bracket.

4. (Currently amended) A method of assembling steering columns according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein ~~in crimping said projections, these~~ projections are crimped with a punch which is pressed toward the center of said column jacket.

5. (Original) A method of assembling steering columns according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein in forming said column jacket, a cylindrical column jacket is formed from a mild steel tube.

6. (Original) A method of assembling steering columns according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein in forming said column jacket, a cylindrical column jacket is formed from an Al-Mn alloy tube.